

THE  
FORTY MARTYRS  
OF  
**SEBASTE;**

A DRAMATIC SKETCH

BY

W. H. ANDERDON, D. D. BOSTON.

---

**SECOND EDITION.**

---

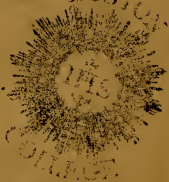
**NEW YORK:**

P. M. HAVERTY, 1 BARCLAY STREET, and  
J. O'DONOGHUE, 65 FRANKLIN STREET, COR. BROADWAY.

**LONDON:**

BURNS, OATES & CO., 17 PORTMAN STREET, W.

1869.





THE  
FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE

A Dramatic Sketch.

BY  
WILLIAM H. ANDERDON, D. D.

---

Second Edition.

---

BOSTON COLLEGE LIBRARY  
CHESTNUT HILL, MASS,

**NEW YORK:**

SOLD FOR THE AUTHOR BY JOHN J. O'DONOGHUE,  
363 BROADWAY, & 65 W FRANKLIN STREET.

**LONDON:**

BURNS, OATES & CO., 17 PORTMAN STREET W  
1869.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

CENTURION, *a Pagan.*

PLANCUS, *an inferior officer, afterwards the fortieth  
Martyr*

RUFUS,  
CASCA,  
VARRO,  
FULVIUS, } *Pagan Roman Soldiers.*

FORTY CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS, } *of the Twelfth or "Thun-  
dering" Legion.*

DEMAS, *one of the Forty, afterwards an Apostate.*

MELITHON, *the youngest of the Forty.*

FATHER OF MELITHON.

---

PLACE *Sebaste, in Armenia.*

TIME *the night and morning of March 9-10, A. D. 313.*

---

Some slight dramatic licence has been taken with the recorded circumstances of the Martyrdom. For these, the reader is referred to Butler's *Lives of the Saints*, March 10, and St. Basil, Hom. xx.

PS 1039

A38

F67

THE  
FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.

---

SCENE : THE EDGE OF A FROZEN LAKE, BORDERED BY A PATH,  
UP AND DOWN WHICH A SENTINEL IS PACING.

---

RUFUS, *the Sentinel.*

Well, I've known sharpish winters ; northward march'd  
Against the Dacians, mounted guard, until  
Mine ears froze to the helmet, and I nearly  
Lost my two feet :—but ice-wind such as this  
Not oft rude Boreas blesses man withal.  
Boo-hoo !—the marrow in my bones is ice !  
And, as the blast from yonder Caucasus  
Sweeps o'er the lake, I'd sooner face a sheaf  
Of Parthian arrows, volley'd all at once !  
But for the bear-skin furs, which our good Plancus  
Made the slow commissariat provide,  
(Aye, *he's* the lad to keep his soldiers warm !)  
The Emperor had lost some scores of sentries,  
And Pluto, in like measure, gain'd—

(*louder*) Who goes !

(*Enter Casca and Varro.*)

CASCA. A friend or two.

RUFUS.

The pass ?

20414

CASCA.

Genius of Rome.

RUFUS. Genius of Aquilo would fit to-night!

Ha, Varro, Casca? come to share the watch?  
Some cheering talk, now, under breath, keeps life  
In lungs and limbs that perish else with cold.

CASCA. Truly, my soul hath sunk into my buskins—

VARRO. Yet cannot keep the toes from freezing:  
—booh!

CASCA. Harkye, this night we have a volunteer  
He that comes next on watch is Plancus' self.

RUFUS. Plancus?

CASCA. His own mere fancy leads him to it.  
He wants to see how long those obstinate men,  
Sebaste's Christian troopers, (*laughs*) will hold out.

RUFUS. Eh? this is Greek to me.

VARRO. Thou hast not heard?

True, thou wert absent upon leave till now

CASCA. Hark, then :—there is a knot of forty soldiers,  
Here in our winter-quarters, as thou know'st,  
Enslavèd to the Christians' vile belief,  
And, like the rest of all that hang-dog set,  
Morose, unsocial—

RUFUS.

Aye, in one word, Christians.

I've known it, all along. Well, as for darkness,  
They've had a taste of what they love so much.  
Before my furlough, 'twas a common thing  
To treat them to the black hole, and half starve 'em  
On bread as black and noisome as the hole,  
With other points of military treatment  
For such as wo'nt burn incense :—

VARRO. Reason good.

CASCA. Of course!

VARRO. Who takes the soldier's oath of service  
Binds himself over, body, soul and thought,  
And conscience, too—(that's their new-fangled word)—  
Conscience—(*laughs*) to Cæsar's will:—

RUFUS. And who gainsays,  
And makes his will out stronger than the Cæsar's,  
Or better—why, he's—what's the word?

CASCA. A rebel.

RUFUS. Rebel; that's it—an ugly-sounding word.

VARRO. And so is Christian, and a senseless one.  
What means it, after all? Expound.

CASCA. That's easy  
The Christians, you must know, came first from Egypt,  
Led by one Moses, or Sesostris then,  
Taking advantage when the tide was out,  
They cross'd to Joppa, took Jerusalem,  
And gave some trouble to the god Vespasian—

RUFUS. Slaves to stand up against an Emperor!

CASCA. He soon dislodg'd and brought them chain'd  
to Rome,  
Made them pile up his amphitheatre,  
Then, for their wages, gave them to the lions.

RUFUS. He should have sent 'em hither, to mount  
guard—

VARRO. Or hurl at one another blocks of ice!  
The only shows this frost-bound clime affords.

CASCA. Nay, they wo'nt fight, as gladiators do—  
They let themselves be slaughter'd, like dumb sheep:

Fancying, when so they die, some Genius comes  
 Potent and winged, like a Victory,  
 And bears them off, to dwell beyond the stars;  
 All which they forfeit, (so their priests proclaim,)  
 By one small pinch of incense to the gods—

VARRO, (*impatiently*)—With such-like follies of belief and practice,

Tedious to mention, till we're round the fire.

RUFUS. I would we were!—how slow the watch-time  
 creeps!

Stiff—stiff and cramp'd, as my great-grandfather!

CASCA. Cheerly, boy! let 's a song:—

(*Sings, with chattering teeth. The others join.*)

O Rome, the great! Genius of mighty Rome!

Thy glory to uphold,

'Mid this Cimmerian cold,

Thy faithful soldiers bivouack far from home!

VARRO. Not so much comfort in it, after all;

'Tis hard to warm oneself with bare ideas.

RUFUS. But tell me, Casca, you began to say  
 Somewhat of Plancus, and these Christian fools.

CASCA. Ho, I forgot he 'll march them here anon  
 For their last trial, nay, their certain death:—  
 If harden'd they remain, bak'd will they be!

(*laughs.*)

RUFUS. What mean you?

CASCA, (*earnestly*) Think, old comrade; if to pace  
 Along the frozen margin of this mere,  
 Swept by a scythe-wind, be so sore a thing,  
 What were it, then, unbearskinn'd, and exposed



With naked feet, clad but in one thin tunic,  
To stand, and shudder through the night, nor stir  
From the dark pavement of the lake until—

VARRO. Eh, Phlegethon! the very mention of it  
Shoots pins and needles through my shuddering soul!

RUFUS. And must these forty undergo such doom?

CASCA. My word upon 't the general has concluded  
To make them sacrifice, or make an end.

VARRO. And yet, 'tis pity, on my life! each one  
A tried, good soldier, orderly in camp,  
Facing the enemy like very lions:—  
Barring their superstition, blamable all.

CASCA. How they behav'd, when in the Dacian war,  
For some brief space the legion's wav'ring line  
Made it a doubtful issue!—

VARRO. Hush—they come.

*(Enter Centurion, with Plancus, heading a double file of soldiers, marching slowly to military music. The martyrs walk between them, bare-headed, and lightly clad; their hands folded in prayer. The martyrs are placed on the lake the other soldiers file off to the margin.)*

CENTURION Halt! form phalanx-wise. Soldiers of  
the Twelfth,

I 'm no great speechifier, that you know—  
But this I 've got to say When the fight 's on,  
True men ye be, stand, like so much stone wall,  
For charging, no men better:—why, in camp,  
Mutiny thus? I want to save you:—Come!

FIRST MARTYR. Centurion, when the soldier gets an  
order

From the chief general, must he not obey?

CENTURION. Aye, that 's the case, old comrade! just  
the case

I call that sense the thing lies in a nutshell—

Could 'nt be better put—so then, to-morrow

Sees you at sacrifice early parade, mind!—

'Tention! right shoulders for'ard! wheel—quick  
march!

FIRST MARTYR. We move no step that nears us to  
the idol.

Our Emperor is the Holy One: He bids

His faithful soldiers serve Him first, then man.

PLANUS. You lose your time, Centurion. Some  
Erinnys,

Some darkling demon, spreads his vampire wings

Over their minds, drives them, of sense bereft,

Onward and unresisting, to their doom.

FIRST MARTYR, (*to Planus.*) How was it, when the  
Emperor Mark Aurelius

Led the same Twelfth, the Cæsar's Christian legion,

Across the Danube, 'gainst the Quadi there?

PLANUS. Nay, the Twelfth legion earn'd a crown  
that day!

By whatsoever magic they brought down

The blest abundant rain, that sav'd our thousands

From deadly thirst then drove, as in live rage,

Right in the foe's face, with blue sheeted flame,

While o'er him, peal on peal, fierce thunder growl'd.

VARRO. Each drop was worth a pearl, as in their  
helmets

And upturn'd shields—so runs the chronicle—  
 Our eager soldiers caught that shower of life,  
 Drank as they charg'd, and freshly fought, and won!

CASCA. Hence are ye nam'd the Thunderers, utter  
 now

An omen on the lucky side—on Cæsar's,  
 And save yourselves!

FIRST MARTYR. Here stand we, to endure.

CENTURION. In Cæsar's name! Ye heard the just  
 decree

Of the most clement Emperor Licinius  
 'Gainst those who worship not as Rome commands.  
 Yet once more we proclaim the better choice:—

*(Reads from a paper.)*

“ *Whoso repenteth him of this rebellion,*

“ *And wills to sacrifice, for him prepare*

“ *Warm garments, fire, a cheering goblet spic'd —*

“ *Brief, whatsoe'er restores the vital warmth,*

“ *And gives him back to duty and enjoyment.*”

VARRO. See you the comfortable hearth? Comes not  
 A savory steam athwart the starving sense?  
 Be wise. keep life 'tis worth it, after all.

DEMAS *(shivering, aside)*.

And good terms, too, could one but just compound!  
 Is there no middle course? nay, let me think.

FIRST MARTYR. Comrades, we thank you:—friend-  
 ship true and warm

Holds brave men's hearts in union, when together  
 They have endur'd campaigning, fac'd the storm  
 Of battle, or the stress of wintry weather;

And you and I, Centurion, with the rest  
 Of these, have often thrown a cheerful breast  
 On levell'd lances of the foes of Rome,  
 Holding our lives cheap, at their word from home.

CENTURION. Shoulder to shoulder, never flinch'd  
 nor turn'd!

I grow half womanish, the while thou speakest.

DEMAS (*aside*). Could n't he let us off, then, under  
 cover

Of this dark night?—or one,—just only one?

FIRST MARTYR (*to Centurion*).

Such ancient good-will prompts you now to urge  
 What we accept not:—for the motive, thanks.

For you, with many more, we offer up  
 Our pain, thrice willing. Said I well, my brothers?

ALL THE FORTY, *except Demas*.

You speak our steadfast purpose: *Deo gratias*.

DEMAS (*aside*). Aye, well:—I'll brave it out, e'en  
 with the rest.

A soldier, blenching from a cold night-watch?  
 Nay, rouse thy courage, Demas—play the man

CENTURION. 'Tis this keen wind assaults my clouded  
 eye;

(*Covers his face.*)

Deem it no more.

(*Pause.*)

Well: each one to his taste.  
 Christians, I know, will keep a word once pledg'd.  
 We leave you on parole, you will not stir  
 From off this ice; 'twere nothing short of murder

To keep a guard here:—one will stay, for help  
Should any come back to a sounder mind.

Plancus, your turn is first. Now, men—'tention!  
Right shoulders for'ard! March! and so to camp.

*(Exeunt all but the Forty and Plancus. He  
paces up and down, watching them.)*

FIRST MARTYR. Dear brothers, lest our souls' dark  
prowling foe

Besiege the frail sense, and his entrance win  
To the will's fortress, guard its gates with prayer!

DEMAS *(aside, with chattering teeth)*.

Indeed, yon fire is blazing cheerfully!

Ah, the wind brings a sniff of that spic'd wine—  
How warm it must be!

ALL THE REST. Patience grant, and strength:  
With final perseverance seal our brows!

#### DUET AND CHORUS.

On Sinai's rock, in Carmel grove,  
Thro' forty days, both eve and morn,  
Thy Saints, by heavenly grace upborne,  
Endur'd their fast, in prayer and love  
Thro' forty days, in mortal state,  
Fasting, the tempter Thou didst wait.

*(Chorus repeats the two last lines.)*

PLANCUS *(aside)*. Calm, this—to suffer with unfalter-  
ing song!

It must be magic as they say that witches,  
However deep you prick them, never bleed.

DEMAS (*aside*). Could I so shame my legion, and my  
standard

As craven to confess, or cry, Release?

# DUET AND CHORUS.

By that fair number, forty, still  
Thy people's Lenten fast is spann'd :  
Here in close rank Thy forty stand  
And keep their vigil, by Thy will  
Quaternions ten, we guard this ground :  
May forty martyrs, Lord ! be crown'd.  
(*Chorus repeats the two last lines.*)

PLANOUS. Bah ! on mine honor, 'tis a sorry thing  
To see brave soldiers turn to icicles  
Before one's very eyes!—(*pauses.*)

Aye, there they stand  
Squar'd, rank and file ; as if the trumpet's note  
Should ring out to the legion, Front, and Charge !  
Yet all disarm'd—no enemy to face  
But this unbearable north-wind !

DEMAS (*aside*). All former  
Trials I've borne, but *this* transcendeth all !  
A glorious thing to wear the martyr's crown,  
But, oh ! some lighter cross to lead thereto !

FIRST MARTYR. Sing we such hymn as those three  
sainted youths  
Who walk'd in Babel, 'mid the furnace flame  
Made seven times fiercer by a king's command.

SECOND MARTYR. *Benedicite omnia opera Domini  
Domino :*

ALL, EXCEPT DEMAS.

*Laudate et superexaltate eum in sæcula.*

THIRD MARTYR. Ice, with keen-darting frost, and  
shrill north-wind

That into deathly hillocks piles the snow,  
Not less than javelins of resistless fire  
Are servitors, and readiest instruments  
Swiftly to leap forth at His lightest word  
Whose *fiat* is their being !

FOURTH MARTYR. Lord most high,  
This quivering human flesh, impress'd by pain,  
Didst Thou assume, and suffering, henceforth,  
By Thy divine pangs hath been sanctified  
Till time, and earth, and trial, be no more !

*One of the Martyrs falls and dies.)*

PLANCOUS. Ha ! there goes one—  
The first who drops ! that's brave Callistratus ;  
A dauntless soldier, now, who won his wreath  
Five years ago, campaigning in Pannonia :—  
So from the Forty passes Number One.

DEMAS (*aside*). I ne'er can stand it ! keener every  
moment

The ice-wind pierces, like a two-edg'd sword !

*(A second falls and dies.)*

PLANCOUS (*leaning on his spear*).  
A second :—and no marvel. Cold like this  
Would numb the sense of an Armenian bear !  
It makes *me* drowsy here, wrapp'd in his fur :

Heh! mortal flesh can't stand a night so bitter

*Enter Fulvius.*

PLANCOUS. In good time, the relief. Watch thou, my friend,

For my sleep-weighted lids would need a pulley

To keep them up :—I'll rest here by the fire.

*(Sinks to sleep at the opposite side of the stage.)*

*Fulvius paces up and down, watching.*

*A third Martyr falls and dies.*

FULVIUS. Aye, fast they go :—the sooner out of pain.

FIFTH MARTYR. Oh, by the cold of Bethlem's starry night,

That keen birth-hour, Thy weak defenceless limbs

Which smote—one day to quiver on the Cross

Alike with cold and agony—nerve us now!

DEMAS *(aside)*. Cold, cold intensely cold!—how long?—how long?

*(A fourth falls and dies.)*

A MARTYR. Heap fire upon our enemies' heads, to melt Their hardness, and dissolve them into love!

For each life here, grant us, dear Lord, a soul

Of the benighted whom we left in camp.

*(A fifth falls and dies.)*

## DUET AND CHORUS.

### I.

One in eight is call'd to rest,

One in eight ascends on high!



Five new martyrs 'mid the blest,  
Cloth'd with immortality

*ALL, except Demas.*

Soon the perfect sum complete!  
Gather all around Thy throne.  
Forty souls in triumph greet,  
Thou, their rich Reward alone!

*(From this time, the martyrs fall in succession, at intervals, according to the number represented on the stage.)*

II.

Strait the ways that lead above;  
Death, or life, the end may gain—  
As Thou callest, so Thy love  
Conquers every force of pain!

CHORUS, *as before.*

Soon the perfect, etc.

III.

Martyrs all to Thee aspire,  
Now by scourge, by rack, or sword:  
These through blood, as those by fire,  
Gaining, each in turn, their Lord!

CHORUS, *as before.*

Soon the perfect, etc.

IV

Willing victims, here we stand;  
Brief the pains of martyrdom—

Vigil brief to veteran band,  
Till Thy clarion sound us home !

CHORUS, *as before.*

Soon the perfect, etc.

PLANCUS, (*starting up*) Fade not, bright vision ! stay,  
ye glorious forms !

Declare—why forty crowns save one ?

FULVIUS.

Ho, Plancus !

(*shakes him.*)

Awake, man !—wake ! What, muttering thy dreams ?

PLANCUS. As I stand here, I saw them !

FULVIUS.

Saw ? nay—whom ?

Saw thro' your eyelids, then !

(*laughs.*)

PLANCUS.

No jest—no jest—

FULVIUS. You're not yet half awake !

(*shakes him.*)

PLANCUS.

The sense lay bound

In slumber, but the soul gaz'd forth, and saw

FULVIUS. Tell us this dream, now ?

PLANCUS.

When I laid me down,

Wrapp'd in my cloak, still floated thro' my brain

That griesly sight. still mark'd I, how one fell

And next his neighbour, as thou sawest too,

Perishing out of life, yet conquerors all

O'er sense and pain, as victims for their faith.

A MARTYR. O ye angels of the Lord, bless ye the  
Lord

THE REST. O ye heavens, bless ye the Lord !

PLANCUS. Then the black ice, and those men's forty  
shapes,

Some standing yet, and prostrate some, receiv'd  
 A sudden splendour from above, that lit  
 With warmest, cheeriest radiance, the grim scene,  
 As when in some blithe morning of the May  
 The sun comes out, chasing chill mists away  
 FULVIUS, (*laughs.*)

That is, you nodded off, and dream'd, perchance,  
 You lay in sunshine, by the banks of Tiber,  
 In one of those warm nooks, where you and I  
 A lightsome stave of Horace often troll'd.

A MARTYR. O ye sun and moon, bless ye the Lord :

THE REST. O ye stars of heaven, bless ye the Lord !

PLANCUS. Nay, hear me. Heralded by those pure  
 rays,

Celestial forms descended, on whose brows  
 Such crowns as pal'd th' imperial sapphire shone  
 And in their hands outreach'd, the blest immortals  
 (Genii, or how to name them, would I knew !)  
 Brought diadems as glorious as their own,  
 And bent o'er each one fallen on the ice  
 To crown the frost-bound corse with starry splendour ;  
 At whose first touch the features pain-deformed,  
 Relaxing into slumb'rous peace, show'd fair  
 As theirs who in Elysium sleep, nor dream.

A MARTYR. O ye fire and heat, bless ye the Lord :

THE REST. O ye cold and heat, bless ye the Lord !

DEMAS (*aside, with great agony.*) I cannot bear it—I  
 must needs give in !

FULVIUS. You dreamt, at least ! and, as philosophers  
 Prate of the rule of contraries, your fancy

Took a flight backward into summers past,  
 Chang'd to blood heat this biting cold, yet borrow'd  
 From yon keen starlight the said sparkling crowns.

A MARTYR. O ye dewes and hoar-frost, bless ye the  
 Lord

THE REST. O ye frost and cold, bless ye the Lord!

DEMAS (*aside*). No use to think—I must plunge  
 blindly on!

PLANCUS. Why, then, if all were fancy, did I note  
*One* crown yet lack'd to fill the perfect sum?  
 For o'er the heads of those who still erect  
 Suffer'd and prayed, the starry diadems  
 Were held suspended, till their trial o'er,  
 Then lowered softly as they fell in death:—  
 But one went crownless.

FULVIUS. One?

PLANCUS. No crown for him  
 Was brought:—why thus?

FULVIUS. Nay; why does thistledown  
 Grow on the stalk in always an odd number?

A MARTYR. O ye ice and snow, bless ye the Lord

THE REST. O ye nights and days, bless ye the Lord!

FULVIUS. It needs Pythagoras, or some village  
 crone

To give a reason. One, belike, thought twice  
 Of his rebellion, whom the pain convinc'd  
 That Cæsar, after all, were best obey'd.  
 (*Demas cries out inarticulately*)

PLANCUS. Hearken what noise is that?

DEMAS. What ho!—spic'd wine!

Quick—or ye come too late! A bear-skin cloak!  
Support me off, here!—lead me to the fire!

PLANCUS. Fulvius, attend him.  
(*Fulvius supports Demas off the ice, and is leading him away.*)

FIRST MARTYR. Brother! Oh, my brother!

DEMAS. Speak not to me—what man can bear, I've borne

This goes beyond all power of man's endurance.

FIRST MARTYR. Breathe but one prayer! the strength  
of Grace awaits thee—

SECOND MARTYR. Grace, brother, and the crown!  
Oh, pause—return!

THIRD MARTYR. All canst thou do, thro' Him whose  
might is all!

DEMAS. Quick—to the fire! I perish while ye speak.  
(*Exit, leaning on Fulvius.*)

FOURTH MARTYR. Alas, and shall our prayers united  
fail?

(*Plancus shows signs of agitation, which increase every moment.*)

FIRST MARTYR. Nay, Lord of power and love! Prayer  
can unfix

(Thy holy word proclaims it) the strong roots  
Of earth's obdurate mountains—

SECOND MARTYR. And no less  
Can turn the wayward currents of man's will!

THIRD MARTYR. The wolf becomes a lamb: the  
heathen owns Thee,  
And each new marvel glorifies Thy Name.

FIRST MARTYR. Thou, to whose arm is nought impossible,

Hear us, and grant!

FOURTH MARTYR. So be we forty still!

PLANCUS *coming forward*).

Yes, Grace prevails a gentle power draws me—

I join myself to you, for life and death.

*(Throws off his cloak and upper garment.)*

FULVIUS *(rushing in)*.

Heh, man alive! art mad? What freak is this?

Lose all promotion—join the Nazarene?

PLANCUS. Here I confess the Crucified, and fain

Would hang, for love of Him, upon the Cross!

Baptisèd would I be, into His death—

Pray for me, brothers, that I persevere

FIRST MARTYR. O Love triumphant!

SECOND MARTYR. Mercy's miracle!

FULVIUS. No use to argue:—when a man once joins  
This Christian troop, he takes leave of his wits!

PLANCUS. I choose my portion here, with calmest  
choice.

FULVIUS. Well, if you must, *I've* no choice, that you  
know:—

On with ye to the ice, in Cæsar's name!

*(Pushes him on with the staff of his spear.)*

THIRD MARTYR. Into Thy vineyard, at the last brief  
hour,

Thou call'st one servant more!

FOURTH MARTYR. Thy warrior ranks

Dost freshly fill, nor sufferest empty space

To mock Thee in Thy new creation's sphere.

## DUET AND CHORUS.

Willing victims, here we stand  
 Brief the pains of martyrdom—  
 Vigil brief to vet'ran band,  
 Till Thy clarion sound us home.

CHORUS, *with Plancus.*

Now the full sum stands complete  
 Waft us quickly to Thy throne!  
 Forty souls in triumph greet—  
 Thou, their rich Reward alone.

FULVIUS, *walking up and down, musing.*

Well, the old Gorgon's glance, so feign our poets,  
 Could smite each rash beholder into stone  
 But face so horrible I ne'er have seen  
 As yonder Demas', when he near'd the fire—  
 Groan'd hideous, and fell dead, ere his cramp'd hand  
 Could clutch the goblet, or those blue lips drink!  
 Pah so he's gone—I'd rather brave it here,  
 And chance the great hereafter—if it be—

*Pauses, then resolutely.)*

Hold, Fulvius, man, The Cæsar's creed for thee!  
 Time's nearly up soon my relief is here.  
 For these poor fellows—they 're reliev'd already;  
 Gone to some camp unseen—I hope, good quarters!  
 Plancus and Melithon seem journeying too,  
 And then the play's play'd out. I'm off to Somnus.

*(Sinks to sleep.)*

*(All the Martyrs have died, except Plancus  
 and Melithon.)*

*The sun rises.*

PLANOUS. O rising orb not half so fair thy beams,  
Temp'ring these death chills with a sudden glory,  
As the light new-born in my soul, that glows  
With cheer, with comfort, from the Paraclete!  
High o'er thy lamp, from out th' empyrean home  
Float splendors thro' the golden gates unbarr'd!  
What nearer shines?—a crown!—my destin'd crown!  
Ah, comes the great reward indeed so nigh?  
So brief a pang—can it be recompens'd  
With bliss eternal?

*(pauses, then totters.)*

Yes:—a lightsome sense  
Buoys me to yon blest mansions —tho' the limbs  
Frost-bound, must falter to their kindred earth,  
My soul, baptis'd by heaven-wing'd desire,  
Goes upward—upward!

*(totters.)*

Lord, my God how fair—  
Divinely fair, Thy Wounds—Thyself! I come!

*(falls and dies.)*

MELITHON, *the youngest Martyr, remains alone.*

SONG, *Melithon.*

Youngest of this martyr band,  
Last upon the journey home,  
Waiting, hoping, let me stand  
Till my joyful moment come.



Comrades blest! for Melithon  
 Intercede, amid your joy  
 From your height, securely won,  
 Aid, Oh, aid, a feeblér boy!

Where ye dwell, no age nor blight  
 Enters, nought can fade or fall:  
 In one sabbath noon of light  
 Godlike youth entrances all.

Comrades blest! for Melithon  
 Intercede, amid your joy,  
 From your height, securely won,  
 Aid, Oh aid, a feeblér boy!

*(His father rushes in.)*

FATHER. Where is my child, my Melithon?—living  
 still?

Aye, dear one, thy young vigor has put back  
 Death's icy hand, and thou not yet secure!  
 Still thy crown hovers o'er thee, while the rest  
 Yon golden threshold garlanded have trode,  
 And past into the courts of deathless bliss.

MELITHON (*totters*). A moment, and His grace doth  
 perfect all

In me, as in those blest—I follow, swiftly

FATHER (*supporting him*). O Melithon! my first-  
 born, my one child;—

Prop of *these* aged steps *thou* wouldst have been,

THE FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.

Had nature's voice obtain'd :—but Grace hath won !

MELITHON (*feebly*). He triumphs in His youngest,  
and His least.

FATHER. Child of my prayers, and long since dedi-  
cate

To His all-conquering cross who died thereon—  
Not for one moment—no—such craven impulse  
My heart disowneth—would I pluck thee back  
From the near verge of bliss —Go forth, my son ;  
Go, thou young soldier, with thy comrades crown'd !  
Last, as the latest-born , so forty Saints  
In one strong phalanx round the Throne, shall win  
Grace for th' afflicted Church—for me, thy father !

MELITHON (*pointing upward*). Our Father *there*  
shall comfort thee ! I pass—

My next word pleads for thee, in heaven—see—see !  
The fortieth crown descends . triumph and bliss !

(*falls dead in his father's arms.*)

*Centurion and soldiers march in to quick music, and  
range themselves in close line, in front of the stage.  
Behind them, the martyrs are removed. Then, while  
the music plays louder, the curtain drops, or the scene  
is left empty.*

BOSTON COLLEGE



3 9031 01040868 0

*By Rev. Dr. Anderdon.*

IN THE SNOW; Tales of Mount St. Bernard.

American Edition. Ornamental Cloth, \$1.00.

THE CATHOLIC CRUSOE; Adventures of Owen  
Evans on a desolate Island.

Latest English Edition. Ornamental Cloth, \$1.00.

SEVEN AGES OF CLAREWELL; The Fate of  
Franciscan Monastery. English Edition.

Ornamental Cloth, \$1.00.

AFTERNOONS WITH THE SAINTS; including  
S. Brigid of Kildare.

Neat Cloth, 50 cents.

THE BISHOP OF ORLEANS, ON IRELAND  
Translated. American Edition.

Neat Cloth, 50 cents.

CONFESSION TO A PRIEST;

\$10.00 per Hundred

---

*Edited by the same Author.*

SHORT SERMONS; Written from memory by two  
Children in Ireland.

American Edition, 10 cents.

---

To be had of P. M. HAVERTY, 1 Barclay St., and J. J. O'DONOGHUE,  
Nos. 363 Broadway, and 65 Franklin St., New York.